Kemono no Souja
The Beast Player

VOLUME 1 - PROLOGUE, PART 4

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Crack

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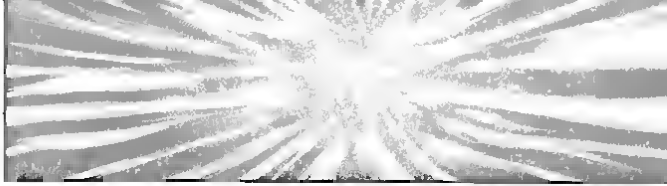
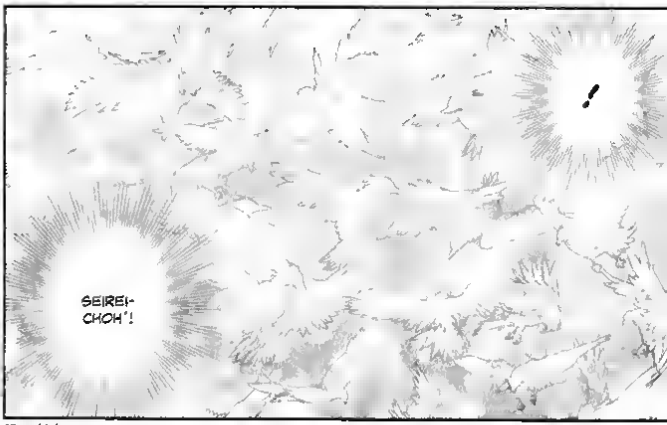
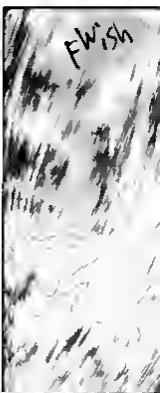
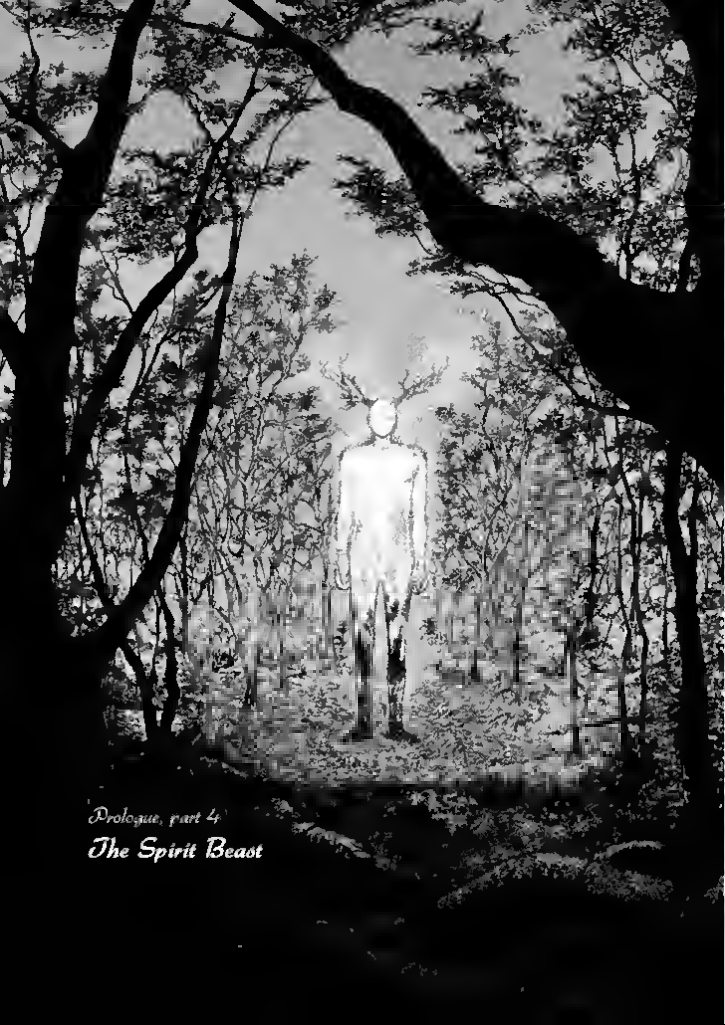




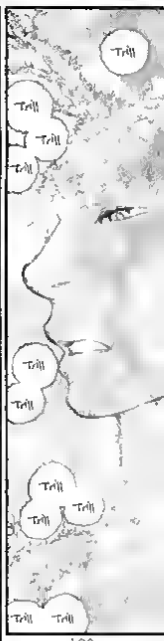
*Spirit birds





Prologue, part 4

The Spirit Beast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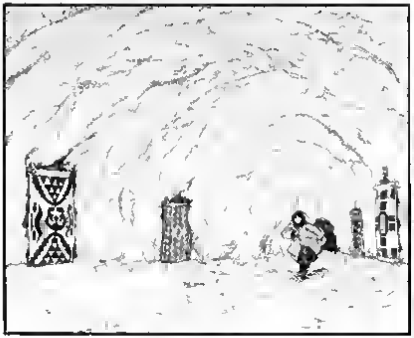
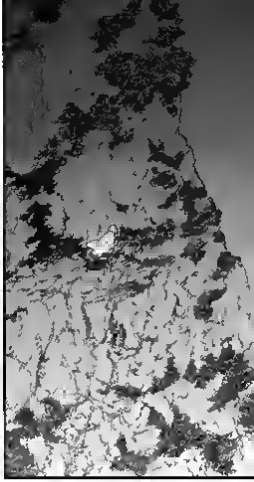
SKATER

Fuoo
Fuoo

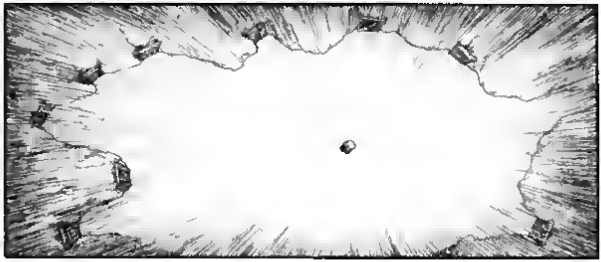
Dash





Trivia —
HUFF
HUFF

Rabbit



RUSTLE
RUSTLE
FLAP
TWINGE
IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?

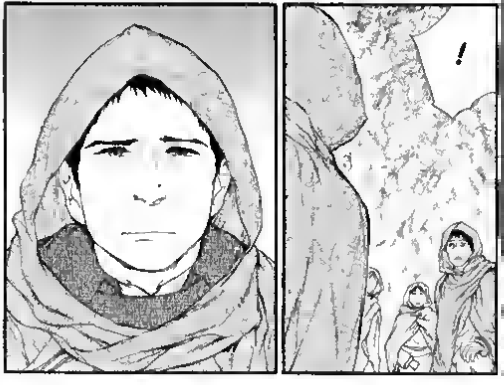
*Spirit beast

"SOMEONE USED THE ART OF CONTROL.
SOMEONE WHISTLED THE TOHDA TUNE,"
IT SAID.
I DON'T HAVE MUCH EXPERIENCE. I'M AFRAID I MAY NOT HAVE CAUGHT ALL THE WORDS, BUT...
RUZZ
!
DID THE SEIREIJU SAY ANYTHING ELSE?
NO,
THAT WAS ALL.
THE ELDERS' COUNCIL MEETING WILL NOW BEGIN.
YOU WILL BE INFORMED.
PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR HOMES.

SHE IGNORED THE WARNING AND BROKE OUR LAW
IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOH-YON
WHO WHISTLED THE TUNE
FOR MY DAUGHTER BECOMING WHAT SHE DID!
I WILL TAKE FULL RESPONSI-BILITY
PLEASE FORGIVE ME
BOW
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT SHE WOULD EMPLOY THE ART?
SHE WAS SO INTEL-LIGENT,
SO KIND,
SO STRONG

WE MUST HURRY
HMM
WHAT HAPPENED
LET US HAVE SOMEONE INVESTIGATE
SEND FOR THE INQUIRER
SUPPOSE SHE HAD BEEN SEEN WHISTLING
HE WOULD BEGIN SEEKING US OUT
IN HOPES OF LEARNING THE ART
SOONER OR LATER WORD WOULD REACH THE ARHAN OF OUR PEOPLE'S ABILITY—
THE ABILITY TO CONTROL TOHDA
TELL THEM THAT UNTIL WE HAVE A CLEARER PICTURE OF THE MATTER, WE WILL BE ON CONSTANT ALERT,
LET THE OTHERS KNOW
AND THAT THERE WILL BE NO CONTACT WITH THE VILLAGES IN THE VALLEY
WE'RE GOING INTO HIDING

Crunch..

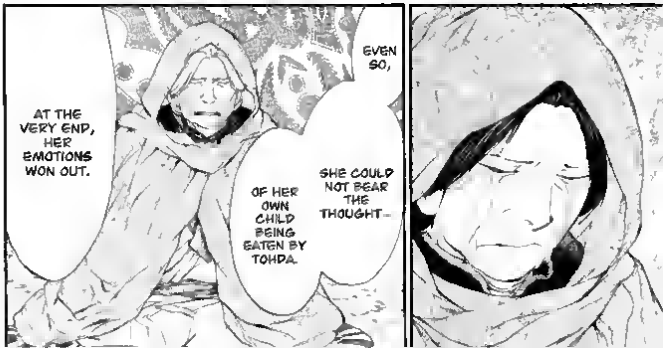

!

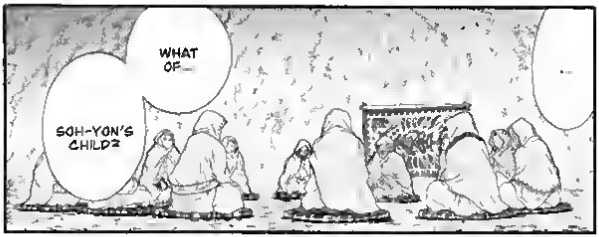
SOH-YON WAS EXECUTED?
YOU'RE SAYING...
THAT

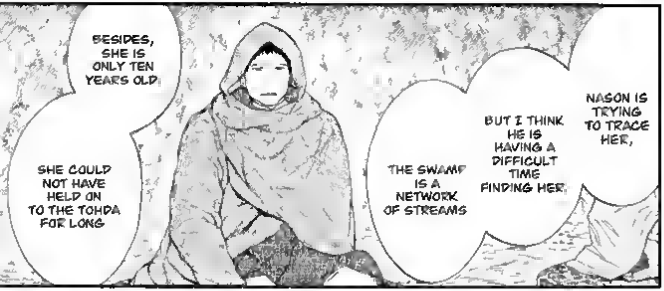
THE INSPECTOR DID NOT ACCOUNT FOR HIS OWN NEGLIGENCE, DECLARED THE TOHDA'S DEATHS A PREMEDITATED CRIME ON HER PART, AND EXECUTED HER.
HOWEVER...
IT WAS TERRIBLE, THE WAY SHE WAS EXECUTED.
I SNEAKED IN TO HAVE A LOOK AT THE CARCASSES, AND THE CHANGE IN THE MUCUS EXPLAINED IT ALL—
THEY HAD ENTERED THE MATING SEASON.
IRONICALLY, SOH-YON MAY HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN RESPONSIBLE.
SHE HAD TO HAVE KNOWN THE TOKUJISUI WAS POISONOUS TO KIBA WHOSE MUCUS HAD CHANGED.
SHE KNEW, AND SHE STILL FED THEM WITH IT.
SOH-YON WAS TOO CLEVER NOT TO HAVE NOTICED.
!
SH22

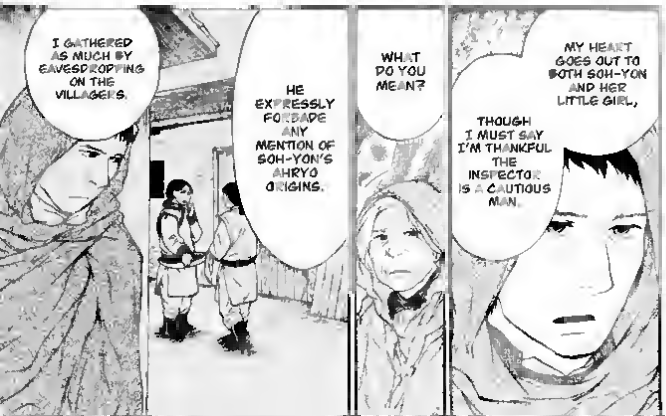
SOH-YON...
ABIDED BY THE WARNING...

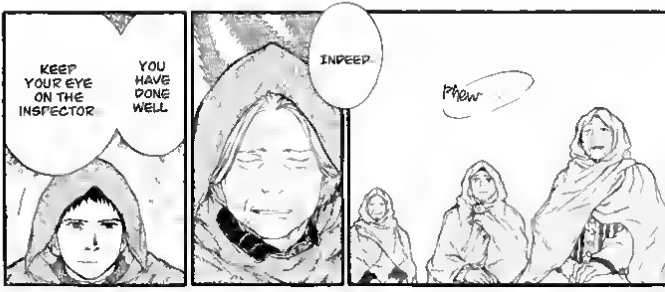
YOUR DAUGHTER STAYED TRUE TO OUR PRINCIPLES
THOUGH SHE KNEW SHE MIGHT BE EXECUTED,
SHE CHOSE TO END THE TOHDA'S LIVES IN ORDER TO PRESERVE OUR SECRET.


EVEN SO,
SHE COULD NOT BEAR THE THOUGHT...
OF HER OWN CHILD BEING EATEN BY TOHDA.
AT THE VERY END, HER EMOTIONS WON OUT.


WHAT OF...
SOH-YON'S CHILD?
...


BESIDES, SHE IS ONLY TEN YEARS OLD.
SHE COULD NOT HAVE HELD ON TO THE TOHDA FOR LONG
THE SWAMP IS A NETWORK OF STREAMS
BUT I THINK HE IS HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME FINDING HER.
NASON IS TRYING TO TRACE HER,


I GATHERED AS MUCH BY EAVESDROPPING ON THE VILLAGERS.
HE EXPRESSLY FORBADE ANY MENTION OF SOH-YON'S AHRYO ORIGINS.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
MY HEART GOES OUT TO BOTH SOH-YON AND HER LITTLE GIRL,
THOUGH I MUST SAY I'M THANKFUL THE INSPECTOR IS A CAUTIOUS MAN.

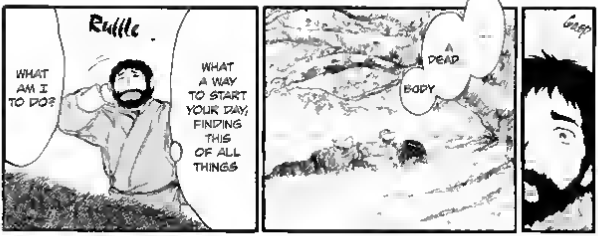

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE INSPECTOR
YOU HAVE DONE WELL
INDEED
PHEW

WE CANNOT AFFORD ANOTHER DISASTER BROUGHT ON BY OUR ART
WE MUST NEVER IGNORE THE WARNING
NO MATTER THE REASON,

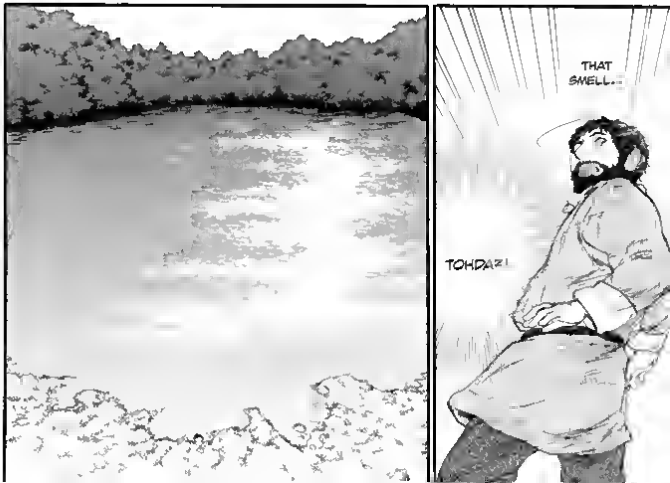
IN THE MEANTIME, WE SHALL LEAVE THIS COUNTRY.
WE DO NOT WANT OUR VERY PRESENCE TO FAN THE FLAMES OF RUMOR
EVEN IF THE ARHAN NEVER HEARS OF IT,

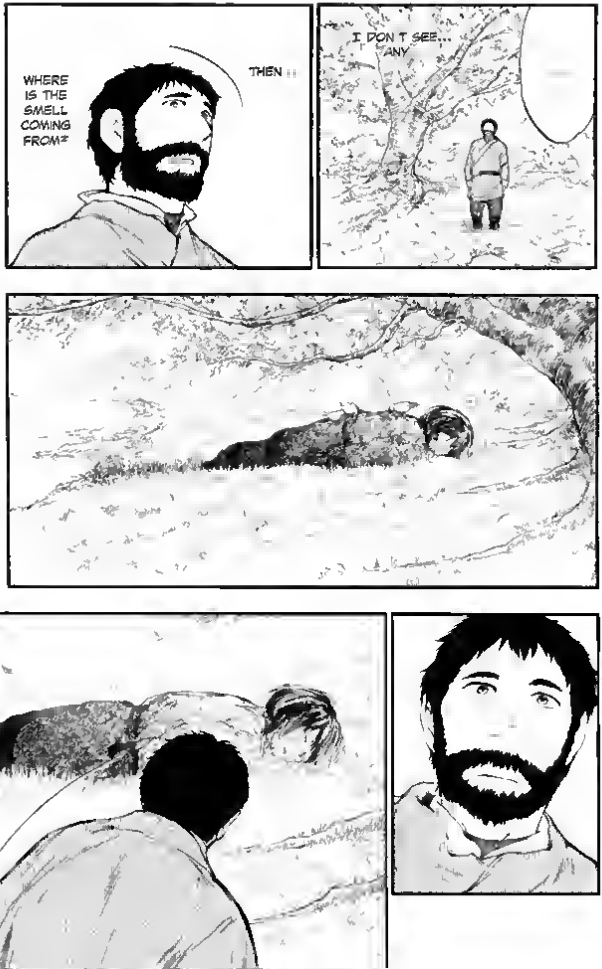
...AND HIDE IN THE MOUNTAINS...
UNTIL ALL IS FORGOTTEN

RIPPLE
THIS IS GOING TO BE A GOOD YEAR.
I EXPECT A HUGE HARVEST OF GOOD QUALITY HONEY.
?
IS THAT?
WHAT


Rustle
WHAT AM I TO DO?
WHAT A WAY TO START YOUR DAY, FINDING THIS OF ALL THINGS
A DEAD BODY
GASP

!
Whoa!

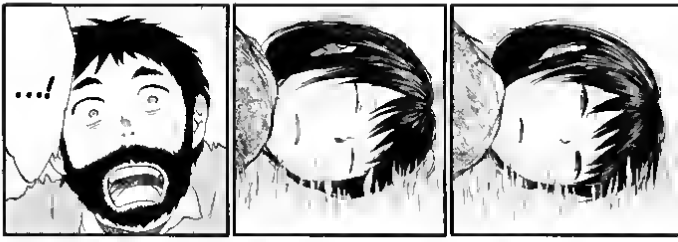

THAT SMELL...
TOHDAI!


WHERE IS THE SMELL COMING FROM?
THEN...
I DON'T SEE... ANY

POOR LITTLE GIRL.
SO YOUNG...

!
huff

SHE'S ALIVE!
DO YOU FEEL ME?
DO YOU HEAR ME?
HEY!
HEY!
WAKE UP!
Pat
Pat
Pat


...!

Roll
THIS WON'T DO
NOT ONE BIT

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